

Daniel E. Coleman, M.D., FCCP

Public Hearing Comments, June 29, 2010

Good Evening Ladies & Gentlemen:

My name is Daniel Coleman, MD and I am Medical Director of the Holy Family Hospital Intensive Care Unit. I am a Critical Care physician and have been a member of the Holy Family medical staff for 24 years, dating back to its time as the Bon Secours Hospital. Through the years, I've had the privilege of serving as Chief of Medicine, Medical Staff President, and Vice President for Medical Affairs. Those positions afforded a close perspective of the quality of the medical care provided by the doctors, nurses and allied health care professionals at Holy Family. Addressing that aspect in particular -- medical care quality -- I wish to bear emphatic witness to the fact that while a community hospital, Holy Family is a first class medical center which successfully holds its own in the pantheon of medical center expertise.

I've served on the staff of 12 medical centers in my career, and eight have been community hospitals like HF. Holy Family impressed me 24 years ago with its firm commitment to medical care quality – a commitment that frankly, I had not observed before that time. The fervent attention to care excellence and patient satisfaction continues at Holy Family to the present day. The quality quest was the driver for our hospital's decision to lead the way in adopting the electronic medical record – an enterprise which relatively few community hospitals have undertaken to date. Holy Family pays careful attention to patient comments and feedback, because it truly cares about them. Our hospital strives continually to do it better – and do it right.

Holy Family Hospital has had an important teaching mission over the years. In addition to the training of local nursing students, HF has been a teaching affiliate of Tufts University School of Medicine for 21 years now. We provide Physical Diagnosis training to Tufts second year medical students, and are the only hospital in the Valley to do so. This educational mission has been valued highly by Tufts students, who two years ago ranked HF as first among the 35 Eastern MA community hospitals participating.

When my wife became ill several years ago with what seemed a serious problem – I asked that she be admitted to Holy Family. The diagnosis was unclear, but I had every confidence in the diagnostic and treatment expertise of my physician colleagues at Holy Family. I was myself a patient in our ED a few years back. I am very willing to "put my money where my mouth is !"

Holy Family Hospital has been – and continues to be – a shining jewel among community medical centers. It has served the people of Methuen, greater Lawrence and southern New Hampshire for 60 years. Holy Family Hospital must continue in its vital health care mission here in the Merrimack Valley. That future now relies on the Cerberus acquisition of the Caritas Christi system – and I respectfully but strongly urge that all parties move ahead, to bring about this most important goal.

Thank you.